

spoke straight. It was easy to understand him. He has a sharp intellect, a steady demeanor, and boundless energy. He began every day at the Pentagon with a singular mission—to serve his country and the men and women who defend her.

Mr. Secretary, today your country thanks you for 6 outstanding years at the Department of Defense. And I thank you for your sacrifice and your service and your devotion to the men and women of our Armed Forces.

I want to thank Joyce for her poise and her grace and for the example she has set for our Nation's military families. Laura and I will miss you both, and we wish you all the best in the years to come.

And now, ladies and gentlemen, I bring to this podium America's 21st Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. at the Pentagon. In his remarks, he referred to Lynne Cheney, wife of Vice President Dick Cheney; Secretary of the Navy Donald C. Winter; and Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld.

Message on the Observance of Hanukkah 2006

December 15, 2006

I send greetings to all those celebrating Hanukkah, the festival of lights.

During Hanukkah, Jewish people everywhere honor the liberation of Jerusalem and the great miracle witnessed in the Holy Temple more than 2,000 years ago. After Jerusalem was conquered by an oppressive king and the Jews lost their right to worship in freedom, Judah Maccabee and his followers courageously set out to reclaim Jerusalem from foreign rule. Though their numbers were small, the Maccabees' dedication to their faith was strong, and they emerged victorious. When they returned to their Holy Temple for its rededication, the Maccabees discovered enough oil to burn for only one day. Yet the oil lit the Holy Temple for eight days, and the light of hope still shines bright in Jewish homes and synagogues throughout the world.

Each year, the glow of the menorah is a reminder of the blessings of a just and loving God and the sacrifices made over the centuries for faith and freedom. Laura and I pray that this holiday season will be a time of happiness in every home and a time of peace throughout the world.

Happy Hanukkah.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Proclamation 8091—Wright Brothers Day, 2006

December 15, 2006

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America has a rich history of exploration and discovery, marked by scientific and technological achievements that have transformed the world. On Wright Brothers Day, we remember two aviation pioneers from Ohio whose big dreams and extraordinary accomplishments helped change the course of human history.

On December 17, 1903, Orville and Wilbur Wright completed the first manned, powered flight in history and ushered all of mankind into a new era of possibility and promise. With Orville at the controls, the Wright brothers' small aircraft traveled 120 feet in 12 seconds above the dunes of Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The age of flight had begun, and in the decades that followed, advancements in aviation would enable determined American risk-takers to cross oceans, break the sound barrier, and walk on the Moon.

Today, our Nation follows the Wright brothers' example of innovation as we continue to explore the frontiers of air and space. My Administration has outlined a vision for space exploration that includes a return to the Moon and a long-term human and robotic program to explore Mars and the solar system. By working to expand the realm of the possible, we can gain a better understanding of the universe and continue the journey that the Wright brothers began more than a century ago.

The Congress, by a joint resolution approved December 17, 1963, as amended (77 Stat. 402; 36 U.S.C. 143), has designated December 17 of each year as “Wright Brothers Day” and has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation inviting the people of the United States to observe that day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim December 17, 2006, as Wright Brothers Day.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:34 a.m., December 18, 2006]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on December 19.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President’s public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

December 9

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

December 10

In the afternoon, the President and Mrs. Bush went to the National Building Museum where they participated in the taping of the annual “Christmas in Washington” concert for later television broadcast.

In the evening, the President and Mrs. Bush returned to the White House.

December 11

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing.

In the afternoon, in the Oval Office, the President participated in an interview with Stephen F. Hayes of the *Weekly Standard*. Later, also in the Oval Office, he met with outside experts on Iraq.

The President announced his intention to appoint Patricia Hanahan Engman, Robert E. Peterson, and Peter W. Tredick as members of the Presidential Emergency Board No. 240, and, upon appointment, to designate Peter W. Tredick as Chair.

December 12

In the morning, in his private dining room, the President had breakfast with Secretary of Defense-designate Robert M. Gates. Later, he had an intelligence briefing.

Later in the morning, in the Roosevelt Room, the President participated in a video conference call with U.S. military commanders and Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad.

In the evening, on the State Floor, the President and Mrs. Bush hosted two holiday receptions.

The President declared a major disaster in Washington and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides on November 2–11.

The President declared a major disaster in New York and ordered Federal aid to supplement State and local recovery efforts in the area struck by severe storms and flooding on November 16–17.

December 13

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he had separate telephone conversations with President Jalal Talabani of Iraq and Masoud Barzani, president of the Kurdistan region of Iraq.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Arlington, VA. Later, at the Pentagon, he and Vice President Dick Cheney met with U.S. military personnel. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

In the evening, on the State Floor, the President and Mrs. Bush hosted a holiday reception.

The White House announced that the President will welcome President Jose